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Attorney Docket No. RSW920000127US1 (5577-321)

PATENT

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re: Kovales et al.

Confirmation No.: 2011

Serial No.: 09/782,772

Examiner: Joseph T. Phan

Filed: February 13, 2001

Group Art Unit: 2645

For: RECORDING AND RECEIVING VOICEMAIL WITH FREEFORM BOOKMARKS

CERTIFICATE OF MAILING UNDER 37 CFR 1.8

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Traci Brown

Date: March 30, 2005

Mail Stop Appeal Brief-Patents
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

**TRANSMITTAL OF APPEAL BRIEF
(PATENT APPLICATION--37 C.F.R. § 1.192)**

1. Transmitted herewith is the APPEAL BRIEF for the above-identified application, pursuant to the Notice of Appeal filed on **February 28, 2005**.

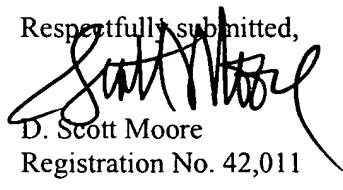
2. This application is filed on behalf of

a small entity.

3. Pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.17(c), the fee for filing the Appeal Brief is:

small entity \$250.00
 other than small entity \$500.00

Appeal Brief fee due: \$500.00
Any additional fee or refund may be charged to Deposit Account 09-0461.

Respectfully submitted,

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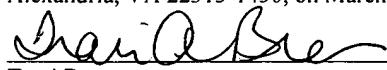
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APPELLANTS' BRIEF ON APPEAL UNDER 37 C.F.R. §41.37

Sir:

This Appeal Brief is filed pursuant to the "Notice of Appeal to the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences" filed February 28, 2005.

Real Party In Interest

The real party in interest is assignee International Business Machines, Inc., Armonk, New York.

Related Appeals and Interferences

Appellants are aware of no appeals or interferences that would be affected by the present appeal.

Status of Claims

Appellants appeal the final rejection of Claims 1 - 91, which as of the filing date of this Brief remain under consideration. The claims at issue as included in Appellants' response to the final Office Action of August 26, 2004 are attached hereto as Appendix A.

Status of Amendments

Two responses have been filed in the present case: An "Amendment/Response" was filed June 16, 2004 in response to an Office Action mailed March 18, 2004. An "Amendment And Request For Reconsideration" was filed December 3, 2004 in response to a final Office Action mailed August 26, 2004, which was entered as indicated in an Advisory Action mailed January 28, 2005. No claims have been canceled in prosecuting the present application; therefore, Claims 1 - 91 remain for consideration on the present appeal.

Summary of Claimed Subject Matter

Appellants appeal the final rejection of independent Claims 1, 33, and 57.

Independent Claim 1 is directed to a method in which at least one bookmark for a voice mail message is provided by a caller leaving the voice mail message (event 106, FIG. 1; Specification, page 13, line 14 through page 14, line 4).

Independent Claim 33 is directed to a system for voice mail messages comprising means for leaving a voice mail message by a caller (events 104 and 105 of FIG. 1; Specification, page 13, line 14 through page 14, line 1) and means for providing at least one bookmark for the voice mail message by the caller (event 106, FIG. 1; Specification, page 13, line 14 through page 14, line 4). The voice mail system 101 of FIG. 1 (Specification, page 13, lines 17 - 20) provides structure corresponding to the means for leaving a voice mail message recitation and the keyed alert sequence (KAS), for example, in combination with the voice mail system 101 of FIG. 1 provides structure corresponding to the means for providing at least one bookmark recitation (Specification, page 10, line 4 through page 11, line 2).

Independent Claim 57 is directed to a computer program product for voice mail messages. The computer program product embodied on one or more computer-readable media

(Specification, page 32, line 18 through page 33, line 4 and page 33, lines 15 - 19). The computer program product comprising computer-readable program code configured to create at least one bookmark for a voice mail message by a caller leaving the voice mail message (event 106, FIG. 1; Specification, page 13, line 14 through page 14, line 4).

Dependent Claim 43 is argued separately below and is directed to a system for voice mail messages comprising means for leaving a voice mail message by a caller (events 104 and 105 of FIG. 1; Specification, page 13, line 14 through page 14, line 1) and means for providing at least one bookmark for the voice mail message by the caller (event 106, FIG. 1; Specification, page 13, line 14 through page 14, line 4). The system further comprises means for creating a bookmarked message from the voice mail message and the at least one bookmark (Specification, page 15, lines 12 - 16) and means for using the at least one bookmark to perform actions selectively on one or more segments of the voice mail message (Specification, page 17, lines 3 - 19), wherein the selected segments have one or more different degrees of importance (Specification, page 22, line 16 through page 23, line 2). The voice mail system 101 of FIG. 1 (Specification, page 13, lines 17 - 20) provides structure corresponding to the means for leaving a voice mail message recitation. The keyed alert sequence (KAS), for example, in combination with the voice mail system 101 of FIG. 1 provides structure corresponding to the means for providing at least one bookmark recitation and to the means for creating a bookmarked message from the voice mail message recitation (Specification, page 10, line 4 through page 11, line 2). The data structures of FIGS. 5A through 5G (Specification, page 23, line 10 through page 27, line 17, and the computer-readable media (Specification, page 32, line 18 through page 33, line 4 and page 33, lines 15 - 19) provide structure corresponding to the means for using the at least one bookmark to perform actions selectively on one or more segments of the voice mail message recitation.

Dependent Claim 45 is argued separately below and is directed to a system for voice mail messages comprising means for leaving a voice mail message by a caller (events 104 and 105 of FIG. 1; Specification, page 13, line 14 through page 14, line 1) and means for providing at least one bookmark for the voice mail message by the caller (event 106, FIG. 1; Specification, page 13, line 14 through page 14, line 4). The system further comprises means for creating a bookmarked message from the voice mail message and the at least one bookmark (Specification,

page 15, lines 12 - 16) and means for using the at least one bookmark to perform actions selectively on one or more segments of the voice mail message (Specification, page 17, lines 3 - 19), wherein the actions comprise one or more of saving, deleting, forwarding, listening, skipping, or repeating the one or more segments (FIGS. 3A - 3D; Specification, page 17, line 20 through page 19, line 15), and marking a selected segment as protected or confidential (Specification page 19, lines 16 - 20). The voice mail system 101 of FIG. 1 (Specification, page 13, lines 17 - 20) provides structure corresponding to the means for leaving a voice mail message recitation. The keyed alert sequence (KAS), for example, in combination with the voice mail system 101 of FIG. 1 provides structure corresponding to the means for providing at least one bookmark recitation and to the means for creating a bookmarked message from the voice mail message recitation (Specification, page 10, line 4 through page 11, line 2). The data structures of FIGS. 5A through 5G (Specification, page 23, line 10 through page 27, line 17, and the computer-readable media (Specification, page 32, line 18 through page 33, line 4 and page 33, lines 15 - 19) provide structure corresponding to the means for using the at least one bookmark to perform actions selectively on one or more segments of the voice mail message recitation.

Dependent Claim 53 is argued separately below and is directed to a system for voice mail messages comprising means for leaving a voice mail message by a caller (events 104 and 105 of FIG. 1; Specification, page 13, line 14 through page 14, line 1) and means for providing a plurality of bookmarks for the voice mail message by the caller (event 106, FIG. 1; Specification, page 13, line 14 through page 14, line 4). The system further comprises means for creating a bookmarked message from the voice mail message and the at least one bookmark (Specification, page 15, lines 12 - 16) and means for associating one or more audio cues with one or more of the bookmarks of the voice mail message (Specification, page 20, lines 18 - 20). The voice mail system 101 of FIG. 1 (Specification, page 13, lines 17 - 20) provides structure corresponding to the means for leaving a voice mail message recitation. The keyed alert sequence (KAS), for example, in combination with the voice mail system 101 of FIG. 1 provides structure corresponding to the means for providing at least one bookmark recitation and to the means for creating a bookmarked message from the voice mail message recitation (Specification, page 10, line 4 through page 11, line 2). The data structure of FIG. 5C (Specification, page 23, line 10 through page 27, line 17), and the computer-readable media (Specification, page 32, line 18

through page 33, line 4 and page 33, lines 15 - 19) provide structure corresponding to the means for associating one or more audio cues with one or more of the bookmarks of the voice mail message recitation.

Grounds of Rejection to be Reviewed on Appeal

Independent Claims 1, 33, and 57 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U. S. Patent No. 5,742,736 to Haddock (hereinafter "Haddock").

Independent Claims 1, 33, and 57 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U. S. Patent No. 6,055,495 to Tucker et al. (hereinafter "Tucker").

Dependent Claims 5, 43, and 60 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Haddock.

Dependent Claims 13, 45, and 70 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Haddock.

Dependent Claims 29, 53, and 78 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Haddock.

Argument

I. Introduction to 35 U.S.C. §102 Analysis

Under 35 U.S.C. § 102, "a claim is anticipated only if each and every element as set forth in the claim is found, either expressly or inherently described, in a single prior art reference." M.P.E.P. § 2131 (quoting *Verdegaal Bros. v. Union Oil Co.*, 814 F.2d 628, 631, 2 U.S.P.Q.2d 1051, 1053 (Fed. Cir. 1987)). "Anticipation under 35 U.S.C. § 102 requires the disclosure in a single piece of prior art of each and every limitation of a claimed invention." *Apple Computer Inc. v. Articulate Sys. Inc.*, 57 U.S.P.Q.2d 1057, 1061 (Fed. Cir. 2000). "The fact that a certain result or characteristic may occur or be present in the prior art is not sufficient to establish the inherency of that result or characteristic. To establish inherency, the extrinsic evidence 'must make clear that the missing descriptive matter is necessarily present in the thing described in the reference, and that it would be so recognized by persons of ordinary skill. Inherency, however,

may not be established by probabilities or possibilities. The mere fact that a certain thing may result from a given set of circumstances is not sufficient." M.P.E.P. § 2112 (citations omitted).

A finding of anticipation further requires that there must be no difference between the claimed invention and the disclosure of the cited reference as viewed by one of ordinary skill in the art. *See Scripps Clinic & Research Foundation v. Genentech Inc.*, 927 F.2d 1565, 1576, 18 U.S.P.Q.2d 1001, 1010 (Fed. Cir. 1991). In particular, the Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit held that a finding of anticipation requires absolute identity for each and every element set forth in the claimed invention. *See Trintec Indus. Inc. v. Top-U.S.A. Corp.*, 63 U.S.P.Q.2d 1597 (Fed. Cir. 2002). Additionally, the cited prior art reference must be enabling, thereby placing the allegedly disclosed matter in the possession of the public. *In re Brown*, 329 F.2d 1006, 1011, 141 U.S.P.Q. 245, 249 (C.C.P.A. 1964). Thus, the prior art reference must adequately describe the claimed invention so that a person of ordinary skill in the art could make and use the invention.

Appellants respectfully submit that the pending independent claims are patentable over the cited references for at least the reason that the cited references do not disclose or suggest, among other things, that a caller leaving a voice mail message may provide one or more bookmarks for the voice mail message. The patentability of the pending claims is discussed in detail hereinafter.

A. Independent Claims 1, 33, and 57 are Patentable over Haddock

Independent Claims 1, 33, and 57 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Haddock. (Final Office Action mailed August 26, 2004, page 2; hereinafter "final Action"). Independent Claims 1, 33, and 57 are directed to a method, a system, and a computer program product, respectively. For example, independent Claim 1 recites:

providing at least one bookmark for a voice mail message by a caller leaving the voice mail message.

Claims 33 and 57 include similar recitations. Thus, according to the independent claims, a caller leaving the voice mail message provides one or more bookmarks for the voice mail message.

The final Action cites col. 3, line 57 through col. 4, line 19 of Haddock as disclosing this aspect of the present invention. Appellants respectfully disagree with this interpretation of the teachings of Haddock. Appellants respectfully submit that, in sharp contrast to independent Claims 1, 33, and 57, Haddock describes a system in which a user or recipient of a voice mail message may place labels or markers in a voice mail message using a graphical user interface running on a personal computer. (Haddock, col. 4, lines 38 - 63). Thus, while Appellants acknowledge that Haddock describes a system in which markers may be inserted into a voice message by a user or recipient who analyzes the voice message after it has been recorded, Appellants respectfully submit that Haddock does not describe or suggest that a caller leaving a voice mail message may provide one or more bookmarks for the voice mail message as recited in independent Claims 1, 33, and 57.

For at least the foregoing reasons, Appellants respectfully submit that independent Claims 1, 33, and 57 are patentable over the cited reference and that dependent Claims 2 - 32, 34 - 56, and 58 - 91 are patentable at least by virtue of their depending from an allowable claim. Accordingly, Appellants respectfully request that the rejection of Claims 1 - 91 be reversed based on the failure of the Examiner to establish a *prima facie* case of anticipation under 35 U.S.C. §102 for at least these reasons.

B. Independent Claims 1, 33, and 57 are Patentable over Tucker

Independent Claims 1, 33, and 57 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Tucker. (Final Action, page 2). Independent Claims 1, 33, and 57 are directed to a method, a system, and a computer program product, respectively. For example, independent Claim 1 recites:

providing at least one bookmark for a voice mail message by a caller leaving the voice mail message.

Claims 33 and 57 include similar recitations. Thus, according to the independent claims, a caller leaving the voice mail message provides one or more bookmarks for the voice mail message.

The final Action cites col. 1 lines 4 - 26, col. 2, lines 1 - 67, and col. 4, lines 1 - 40 of Tucker as disclosing this aspect of the present invention. Appellants respectfully disagree with

this interpretation of the teachings of Tucker. Appellants respectfully submit that, in sharp contrast to independent Claims 1, 33, and 57, Tucker describes a system in which a user or recipient of a voice mail message may play back the message and place markers or labels in the voice mail message using a graphical user interface running on a personal computer. (Tucker, col. 4, lines 1 -23). Thus, while Appellants acknowledge that Tucker describes a system in which markers may be inserted into a voice message by a user or recipient who analyzes the voice message after it has been recorded, Appellants respectfully submit that Tucker does not describe or suggest that a caller leaving a voice mail message may provide one or more bookmarks for the voice mail message as recited in independent Claims 1, 33, and 57.

For at least the foregoing reasons, Appellants respectfully submit that independent Claims 1, 33, and 57 are patentable over the cited reference and that dependent Claims 2 - 32, 34 - 56, and 58 - 91 are patentable at least by virtue of their depending from an allowable claim. Accordingly, Appellants respectfully request that the rejection of Claims 1 - 91 be reversed based on the failure of the Examiner to establish a *prima facie* case of anticipation under 35 U.S.C. §102 for at least these reasons.

C. Dependent Claims 5, 43, and 60 are Patentable over Haddock

Dependent Claims 5, 43, and 60 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Haddock. (Final Action, pages 3 and 4). The final Action cites col. 4, lines 8 - 67 of Haddock as teaching the use of at least one bookmark to mark one or more segments of a voice mail message as having one or more different degrees of importance. (Final Action, pages 3 and 4). As discussed above, however, Appellants submit that the passage cited in the final Action describes a system in which a user or recipient of a voice mail message may place labels or markers in a voice mail message using a graphical user interface running on a personal computer. (Haddock, col. 4, lines 38 - 63). Appellants can find no disclosure in Haddock with respect to a caller leaving a voice mail message using labels or markers to divide segments of the voice mail message according to degrees of importance as recited in dependent Claims 5, 43, and 60.

Accordingly, Appellants respectfully submit that dependent Claims 5, 43, and 60 are separately patentable for at least the foregoing additional reasons and respectfully request that

the rejection of Claims 5, 43, and 60 be reversed based on the failure of the Examiner to establish a prima facie case of anticipation under 35 U.S.C. §102.

D. Dependent Claims 13, 45, and 70 are Patentable over Haddock

Dependent Claims 13, 45, and 70 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Haddock. (Final Action, pages 4 and 5). The final Action cites col. 4, lines 8 - 67 of Haddock as teaching marking a selected segment of a voice mail message as protected or confidential. (Final Action, page 5). As discussed above, however, Appellants submit that the passage cited in the final Action describes a system in which a user or recipient of a voice mail message may place labels or markers in a voice mail message using a graphical user interface running on a personal computer. (Haddock, col. 4, lines 38 - 63). Appellants can find no disclosure in Haddock with respect to a caller leaving a voice mail message using labels or markers to mark a segment of the voice mail message as protected or confidential as recited in dependent Claims 13, 44, and 70.

Accordingly, Appellants respectfully submit that dependent Claims 13, 44, and 70 are separately patentable for at least the foregoing additional reasons and respectfully request that the rejection of Claims 13, 44, and 70 be reversed based on the failure of the Examiner to establish a prima facie case of anticipation under 35 U.S.C. §102.

E. Dependent Claims 29, 53, and 78 are Patentable over Haddock

Dependent Claims 13, 45, and 70 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Haddock. (Final Action, page 7). The final Action cites col. 4, lines 8 - 67 of Haddock as teaching associating one or more audio cues with one or more bookmarks of the voice mail message. (Final Action, page 7). As discussed above, however, Appellants submit that the passage cited in the final Action describes a system in which a user or recipient of a voice mail message may place labels or markers in a voice mail message using a graphical user interface running on a personal computer. (Haddock, col. 4, lines 38 - 63). Appellants can find no disclosure in Haddock with respect to a caller leaving a voice mail message associating one or more audio cues with one or more bookmarks of the voice mail message as recited in dependent Claims 29, 53, and 78. Indeed, Haddock appears to limit the use of bookmarks to providing a

visual cue to the content of the speech of the voice mail message and to provide a link to an appropriate computer application. (Haddock, col. 4, lines 64 - 67).

Accordingly, Appellants respectfully submit that dependent Claims 29, 53, and 78 are separately patentable for at least the foregoing additional reasons and respectfully request that the rejection of Claims 29, 53, and 78 be reversed based on the failure of the Examiner to establish a *prima facie* case of anticipation under 35 U.S.C. §102.

II. Conclusion

In summary, Appellants respectfully submit that, with respect to Claims 1 - 91, the cited references do not teach all of the recitations of the claims. Accordingly, Appellants respectfully request reversal of the rejection of Claims 1 - 91 based on the cited references.

Respectfully submitted,



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APPENDIX A

1. (previously presented) A method comprising: providing at least one bookmark for a voice mail message by a caller leaving the voice mail message.
2. (previously presented) The method according to Claim 1, further comprising creating a bookmarked message from the voice mail message and the at least one bookmark.
3. (previously presented) The method according to Claim 2, further comprising playing the bookmarked message to a listener.
4. (previously presented) The method according to Claim 1, wherein at least one bookmark segments the voice mail message according to one or more topics.
5. (previously presented) The method according to Claim 1, wherein at least one bookmark is used to mark one or more segments of the voice mail message as having one or more different degrees of importance.
6. (original) The method according to Claim 5, wherein a default degree of importance is associated with segments not otherwise marked.
7. (previously presented) The method according to Claim 1, wherein at least one bookmark corresponds to one or more special types of information in the voice mail message.
8. (original) The method according to Claim 7, wherein at least one of the special types of information is a callback telephone number for the caller.
9. (previously presented) The method according to Claim 7, wherein at least one of the special types of information is a callback time and/or date to use when responding to the voice mail message.

10 (original) The method according to Claim 7, wherein at least one of the special types of information is a name of the caller.

11. (original) The method according to Claim 7, wherein at least one of the special types of information is a Uniform Resource Locator (URL).

12. (original) The method according to Claim 7, wherein at least one of the special types of information is an e-mail address.

13. (original) The method according to Claim 7, wherein at least one of the special types of information is a protection or confidentiality indicator.

14. (previously presented) The method according to Claim 2, further comprising using the at least one bookmark to perform actions selectively on one or more segments of the voice mail message.

15. (original) The method according to Claim 14, wherein the selected segments are associated with a topic of the voice mail message.

16. (original) The method according to Claim 14, wherein the selected segments have one or more different degrees of importance.

17. (original) The method according to Claim 14, wherein the selected segments are associated with one or more special types of information in the voice mail message.

18. (original) The method according to Claim 14, wherein the actions comprise one or more of saving, deleting, forwarding, listening, skipping, or repeating the one or more segments.

19. (original) The method according to Claim 18, wherein the actions further comprise marking a selected segment as protected or confidential.

20. (original) The method according to Claim 19, further comprising forwarding the segment marked as protected or confidential to another party.

21. (previously presented) The method according to Claim 17, wherein at least one of the special types of information comprises a Uniform Resource Locator (URL) and where at least one of the actions comprises automatically establishing a connection to the URL.

22. (previously presented) The method according to Claim 2, wherein creating the bookmarked message further comprises storing the at least one bookmark and the voice mail message separately as the bookmarked message.

23. (previously presented) The method according to Claim 2, wherein creating the bookmarked message further comprises storing the at least one bookmark and the voice mail message intermingled as the bookmarked message.

24. (previously presented) The method according to Claim 3, further comprising announcing, for the bookmarked message, a number of the bookmarked segments in the voice mail message.

25. (previously presented) The method according to Claim 5, further comprising announcing, when playing the voice mail message, the different degrees of importance in the voice mail message.

26. (previously presented) The method according to Claim 5, further comprising announcing, when playing the voice mail message, a number of the segments in the different degrees of importance.

27. (previously presented) The method according to Claim 7, further comprising announcing, when playing the voice mail message, the special types of information in the voice mail message.

28. (previously presented) The method according to Claim 7, wherein particular ones of the special types of information are required, and further comprising prompting the caller to provide input for each particular one for which no bookmark is otherwise provided.

29. (previously presented) The method according to Claim 2, wherein a plurality of bookmarks are provided for the voice mail message by the caller, and further comprising associating one or more audio cues with one or more of the bookmarks of the voice mail message.

30. (previously presented) The method according to Claim 29, further comprising: playing the bookmarked message to a listener; and incorporating the one or more associated audio cues along with respective portions of the voice mail message corresponding to the one or more of the bookmarks.

31. (previously presented) The method according to Claim 30, wherein incorporating the one or more associated audio cues further comprises incorporating each associated audio cue with its respective portion of the voice mail message.

32. (previously presented) The method according to Claim 30, wherein incorporating the one or more associated audio cues further comprises incorporating each associated audio cue in-line with its respective portion of the voice mail message.

33. (previously presented) A system for voice mail messages, comprising: means for leaving a voice mail message by a caller; and means for providing at least one bookmark for the voice mail message by the caller.

34. (previously presented) The system according to Claim 33, further comprising means for creating a bookmarked message from the voice mail message and the at least one bookmark.

35. (original) The system according to Claim 34, further comprising means for playing the bookmarked message to a listener.

36. (previously presented) The system according to Claim 33, wherein at least one bookmark segments the voice mail message according to one or more topics.

37. (previously presented) The system according to Claim 33, wherein at least one bookmark corresponds to one or more special types of information in the voice mail message.

38. (original) The system according to Claim 37, wherein the special types of information comprise one or more of: (1) a callback telephone number for the caller; (2) a callback time at which to respond to the voice mail message; and/or (3) a callback date on which to respond to the voice mail message.

39. (original) The system according to Claim 37, wherein at least one of the special types of information is a Uniform Resource Locator (URL).

40. (original) The system according to Claim 37, wherein at least one of the special types of information is a protection or confidentiality indicator.

41. (previously presented) The system according to Claim 34, further comprising means for using the at least one bookmark to perform actions selectively on one or more segments of the voice mail message.

42. (original) The system according to Claim 41, wherein the selected segments are associated with a topic of the voice mail message.

43. (original) The system according to Claim 41, wherein the selected segments have one or more different degrees of importance.

44. (original) The system according to Claim 41, wherein the actions comprise one or more of saving, deleting, forwarding, listening, skipping, or repeating the one or more segments.

45. (original) The system according to Claim 44, wherein the actions further comprise marking a selected segment as protected or confidential.

46. (original) The system according to Claim 45, further comprising forwarding the marked segment to another party.

47. (original) The system according to Claim 41, wherein the selected segments are associated with one or more special types of information in the voice mail message.

48. (previously presented) The system according to Claim 47, wherein at least one of the special types of information comprises a Uniform Resource Locator (URL) and where at least one of the actions comprises automatically establishing a connection to the URL.

49. (previously presented) The system according to Claim 35, further comprising means for announcing, for the bookmarked voice mail message, a number of the bookmarked segments in the voice mail message.

50. (previously presented) The system according to Claim 43, further comprising means for announcing, before playing the voice mail message, the different degrees of importance in the voice mail message.

51. (previously presented) The system according to Claim 37, further comprising means for announcing, after playing the voice mail message, the special types of information in the voice mail message.

52. (previously presented) The system according to Claim 37, wherein particular ones of the special types of information are required, and further comprising means for prompting the caller to provide input for each particular one for which no bookmark is otherwise provided.

53. (previously presented) The system according to Claim 34, wherein a plurality of bookmarks are provided for the voice mail message by the caller, and further comprising means for associating one or more audio cues with one or more of the bookmarks of the voice mail message.

54. (previously presented) The system according to Claim 53, further comprising:
means for playing the bookmarked message to a listener; and
means for incorporating the one or more associated audio cues along with respective portions of the voice mail message corresponding to the one or more of the bookmarks.

55. (original) The system according to Claim 54, wherein the means for incorporating the one or more associated audio cues further comprises means for incorporating each associated audio cue with its respective portion of the voice mail message.

56. (original) The system according to Claim 54, wherein the means for incorporating the one or more associated audio cues further comprises means for incorporating each associated audio cue in-line with its respective portion of the voice mail message.

57. (previously presented) A computer program product for voice mail messages, the computer program product embodied on one or more computer-readable media and comprising:
computer-readable program code configured to create at least one bookmark for a voice mail message by a caller leaving the voice mail message.

58. (previously presented) The computer program product according to Claim 82, further comprising computer-readable program code configured to play the bookmarked message to a listener.

59. (previously presented) The computer program product according to Claim 57, wherein at least one bookmark segments the voice mail message according to one or more topics.

60. (previously presented) The computer program product according to Claim 57, wherein at least one bookmark is used to mark one or more segments of the voice mail message as having one or more different degrees of importance.

61. (original) The computer program product according to Claim 60, wherein a default degree of importance is associated with segments not otherwise marked.

62. (previously presented) The computer program product according to Claim 57, wherein at least one bookmark corresponds to one or more special types of information in the voice mail message.

63. (original) The computer program product according to Claim 62, wherein the special types of information comprise one or more of: (1) a callback telephone number for the caller; (2) a callback time at which to respond to the voice mail message; and/or (3) a callback date on which to respond to the voice mail message.

64. (original) The computer program product according to Claim 62, wherein at least one of the special types of information is a name of the caller.

65. (original) The computer program product according to Claim 62, wherein at least one of the special types of information is an e-mail address.

66. (original) The computer program product according to Claim 62, wherein at least one of the special types of information is a protection or confidentiality indicator.

67. (previously presented) The computer program product according to Claim 59, further comprising computer-readable program code configured to use the at least one bookmark to navigate from one topic of the voice mail message to another.

68. (previously presented) The computer program product according to Claim 58, further comprising computer-readable program code configured to use the at least one bookmark to perform actions selectively on one or more segments of the voice mail message.

69. (original) The computer program product according to Claim 68, wherein the selected segments are associated with a topic of the voice mail message.

70. (original) The computer program product according to Claim 68, wherein the selected segments have one or more different degrees of importance.

71. (original) The computer program product according to Claim 68, wherein the actions comprise one or more of: saving a particular segment; deleting a particular segment; skipping a particular segment; forwarding a particular segment; listening to a particular segment; repeating playback of a particular segment; and marking a particular segment as protected or confidential prior to forwarding the marked segment to another party.

72. (original) The computer program product according to Claim 68, wherein the selected segments are associated with one or more special types of information in the voice mail message.

73. (previously presented) The computer program product according to Claim 72, wherein at least one of the special types of information comprises a Uniform Resource Locator

(URL) and where at least one of the actions comprises automatically establishing a connection to the URL.

74. (previously presented) The computer program product according to Claim 58, further comprising computer-readable program code configured to announce, for the bookmarked voice mail message, a number of the bookmarked segments in the voice mail message.

75. (previously presented) The computer program product according to Claim 60, further comprising computer-readable program code configured to announce, when playing the voice mail message, a number of the segments in the different degrees of importance.

76. (previously presented) The computer program product according to Claim 62, further comprising computer-readable program code configured to announce, after playing the voice mail message, a number of the special types of information in the voice mail message.

77. (previously presented) The computer program product according to Claim 62, wherein particular ones of the special types of information are required, and further comprising computer-readable program code configured to prompt the caller to provide input for each particular one for which no bookmark is otherwise provided.

78. (previously presented) The computer program product according to Claim 58, further comprising computer-readable program code configured to associate one or more audio cues with the at least one bookmark of the voice mail message.

79. (previously presented) The computer program product according to Claim 78, further comprising:

computer-readable program code configured to play the bookmarked message to a listener; and

computer-readable program code configured to incorporate the one or more associated audio cues along with respective portions of the voice mail message corresponding to the at least one bookmark.

80. (previously presented) The computer program product according to Claim 79, wherein the computer-readable program code configured to incorporate the one or more associated audio cues further comprises computer-readable program code configured to incorporate each associated audio cue with its respective portion of the voice mail message.

81. (previously presented) The computer program product according to Claim 79, wherein the computer-readable program code configured to incorporate the one or more associated audio cues further comprises computer-readable program code configured to incorporate each associated audio cue in-line with its respective portion of the voice mail message.

82. (previously presented) The computer program product according to Claim 57, further comprising computer-readable program code configured to create a bookmarked message from the voice mail message and the at least one bookmark.

83. (previously presented) The method according to Claim 5, further comprising announcing, before playing the voice mail message, the different degrees of importance in the voice mail message.

84. (previously presented) The method according to Claim 5, further comprising announcing, after playing the voice mail message, the different degrees of importance in the voice mail message.

85. (previously presented) The method according to Claim 5, further comprising announcing, before playing the voice mail message, a number of the segments in the different degrees of importance.

86. (previously presented) The method according to Claim 5, further comprising announcing, after playing the voice mail message, a number of the segments in the different degrees of importance.

87. (previously presented): The method according to Claim 7, further comprising announcing, before playing the voice mail message, the special types of information in the voice mail message.

88. (previously presented) The method according to Claim 7, further comprising announcing, after playing the voice mail message, the special types of information in the voice mail message.

89. (previously presented) The method according to Claim 1, wherein the caller provides a plurality of bookmarks for the voice mail message.

90. (previously presented) The system according to Claim 33, wherein the caller provides a plurality of bookmarks for the voice mail message.

91. (previously presented) The computer program product according to Claim 57, wherein the caller provides a plurality of bookmarks for the voice mail message.